

# DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## INFORMATION SERVICE



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

FOR Release on July 21.

After an association of 28 years with the Fish and Wildlife Service, of the United States Department of the Interior, and its predecessor agencies, Dr. William Bonar Bell, principal biologist and chief of the Division of Wildlife Research, will retire on August 1, Dr. Ira M. Gabrielson, Service director, has announced.

"We are reluctant to lose Dr. Bell," commented Dr. Gabrielson. "He has been a tireless worker. From the very day he joined our organization (then the Bureau of Biological Survey of the U.S. Department of Agriculture) on July 1, 1916, as an assistant biologist, he took hold of his work with ability and enthusiasm. His advancement was rapid because he has always been alert, hard-working and active in furthering research on wildlife problems. Dr. Bell has discharged his responsibilities as head of an important scientific division conscientiously and with appreciation of the importance of research as the basis for improved wildlife and management practices. We shall miss him, both officially and personally."

Since August 1942, when the Fish and Wildlife Service was decentralized from Washington, D. C., to Chicago, Ill., Dr. Bell's headquarters have been in the latter city. Upon retirement, however, he plans to return to his home in Washington to live.

Born in Milton, Iowa, on June 2, 1877, Dr. Bell received his education in Iowa schools. He was graduated from the Iowa State Normal School, and from the Iowa State University with A.B., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees. After graduation he continued his studies of biology and during the summer of 1901 he conducted biological investigations at the U. S. Fish Commission's station at Woods Hole, Mass. In 1905 he carried on special research at the Smithsonian Table, Zoological Station, in Naples, Italy. He held the position of professor of biology in the North Dakota Agricultural College and Experiment Station from 1905 to 1908 and from 1908 to 1916 he was professor of zoology and physiology. During all that period he served as curator of the Natural History Museum and from 1915 to 1916 he was also entomologist of the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station.

Prior to his employment with the Federal Government, Dr. Bell represented the North Dakota Agricultural Station in a survey of the birds, mammals, and life zones of the State, made in cooperation with the former Bureau of Biological Survey. Later he cooperated again with the Biological Survey in organizing a campaign for the destruction of ground squirrels in North Dakota and was an important factor in the remarkably successful development of that work.

Upon coming into the Bureau of Biological Survey in 1916, Dr. Bell served as chief assistant to Dr. A. K. Fisher, now retired, in the administration of the campaigns for the control of noxious rodents and predatory animals.

In 1927, Dr. Bell was placed in charge of the Division of Biological Investigations. In 1935, when the Bureau of Biological Survey was reorganized while J. V. Darling was its chief, the research units were consolidated into a new Division of Wildlife Research, and Dr. Bell was selected to head this enlarged scientific division. A program of wildlife research in cooperation with land grant colleges and State game departments has been developed under Dr. Bell's supervision.

Dr. Bell is a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, an associate member of the American Ornithologists' Union, and holds membership in the American Society of Mammalogists, the American Forestry Association, the Society of American Foresters, the Washington Academy of Sciences, the Biological Society of Washington, the Wildlife Society, and the University Club of Washington, D. C., and Sigma Zeta and Alpha Zeta, honorary scientific fraternities. While in Chicago he became a member of the Conservation Council, the Chicago Ornithological Society, and a director of the Illinois Audubon Society. In addition, he is listed in "Who's Who" and in "American Men of Science."

Dr. Bell is the author of many State and Federal biological reports, magazine articles, and other publications on the life history and habits of birds and mammals on wildlife conservation.

In Washington, D. C., Dr. Bell's residence is located at 803 Rittenhouse Street, N. W.